

OCCURRENCE OF THE NEOTROPICAL TIGER BEETLE, *CYLINDERA SUTURALIS HELVAEA* (W. HORN, 1903) (COLEOPTERA, CICINDELIDAE), ON SANDBANKS OF THE RESERVOIR BARRAGEM DA PEDRA, RIO DE CONTAS, BAHIA, BRAZIL

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(Occurrence of the Neotropical tiger beetle, *Cylindera suturalis helvaea* (W. Horn, 1903) (Coleoptera, Cicindelidae), on sandbanks of the reservoir Barragem da Pedra, Rio de Contas, Bahia, Brazil) – The occurrence of the tiger beetle *Cylindera (Plectographa) suturalis helvaea* (W. Horn, 1903) in sandbanks of Reservoir Barragem da Pedra, Bahia, Brazil, is registered. Adult beetles were collected using entomological nets on sandbanks between May and September 2003. Cicindelids are one of the most conspicuous groups among invertebrates. That is why they are well suited for bioindication of biodiversity as well as of disturbance and modification in terrestrial ecosystems.

Key words: Coleoptera, Cicindelidae, tiger beetles, occurrence, sandbanks.

(Ocorrência do besouro tigre Neotropical, *Cylindera suturalis helvaea* (W. Horn, 1903) (Coleoptera, Cicindelidae), em bancos de areia do Reservatório da Barragem da Pedra, Rio de Contas, Bahia, Brasil) – Neste estudo é registrada a ocorrência do besouro tigre *Cylindera (Plectographa) suturalis helvaea* (W. Horn, 1903) em bancos de areia no Reservatório da Barragem da Pedra, Bahia, Brasil. Indivíduos adultos foram coletados utilizando-se de redes entomológicas, entre os meses de Maio e Setembro de 2003. Cicindelídeos são um dos mais conspícuos grupos de invertebrados, sendo considerados como bons indicadores de biodiversidade assim como de distúrbios e modificações nos ecossistemas terrestres.

Palavras-chave: Coleoptera, cicindelidae, besouros tigre, ocorrência, bancos de areia.

The reservoir Barragem da Pedra was constructed about 40 years ago in the middle reaches of the Rio de Contas for water supply and the generation of electric energy for the southeastern region of the state of Bahia. Sandbanks are formed along its margins when the water level is low during the dry season. These sites attract invertebrates, birds, and small mammals due to accumulated organic matter and high food supply.

Cicindelids, also known as tiger beetles, are one of the most conspicuous group among invertebrates. According to CASSOLA & PEARSON (2000) this beetle family (Coleoptera, Cicindelidae) contains around 2300 described species. They are found all over the world's land surface except for Antarctica, the Arctic north of 65° latitude, Tasmania, and some isolated oceanic islands such as Hawaii and the Maldives. They often display showy colors and occur in habitats where they can easily be observed.

Adults are very rapid runners and agile flyers and therefore hard to catch at times. Highest species diversity is found in the tropics and subtropics (PEARSON & VOGLER, 2001). Cicindelidae is a family well suited for bioindication of biodiversity as well as of disturbance and modification in terrestrial ecosystems (PEARSON & CASSOLA, 1992; CARROLL & PEARSON, 1998; RODRIGUEZ *et al.*, 1998).

Around 460 species are known from the Neotropics (CASSOLA & PEARSON, 2000). The genus *Cylindera* comprises 33 neotropical and 173 species from other regions of the

world (WIESNER, 1992).

Adults beetles were collected using an entomological net on sandbanks (13°50,095'S, 40°38,998'W) between May and September 2003. The sampling was done around midday when beetles show their highest activity. Specimens were conserved in 70 % ethanol. They were identified by Wiesner as *Cylindera (Plectographa) suturalis helvaea* (W. Horn, 1903). Voucher specimens were deposited in the "Museu de Zoologia da Universidade de São Paulo" (MZUSP; Brazil) and in the Entomological Collection of the "Laboratório de Zoologia dos Invertebrados da Universidade Estadual do Sudoeste da Bahia, Campus de Jequié" (UESB, Bahia, Brazil).

The species *Cylindera suturalis* occurs from islands in the Caribbean throughout South America east of the Andes to southeastern Brazil (PEARSON *et al.*, 1999; CASSOLA & PEARSON, 2001). Habitats are sandy river and sea beaches (PEARSON *et al.* 1999; FREITAG & BARNES, 1989). In Brazil it is known from the Amazon, various states in the Northeast, Mato Grosso, and Santa Catharina (FREITAG & BARNES, 1989; ZERM *et al.*, 2001). Information on the natural history in Central Amazonian floodplains is also given in ZERM & ADIS (2001).

The sub-species *C. s. helvaea* is listed for Venezuela only (WIESNER, 1992), but is also known from the Brazilian Amazon, the Rio Cuiabá and Rio Caçares (both western Brazil), Trinidad, and French Guyana (ZERM & ADIS, unpubl. data; WIESNER, unpubl. data). Further studies are needed to clarify the geographical variation of this species (complex).

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